



NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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COMMISSION CLARIFIES THAT TWO-LINE CAPTIONED TELEPHONE SERVICE IS ELIGIBLE FOR COMPENSATION FROM THE INTERSTATE TRS FUND

Washington, DC -- Today, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) clarified that two-line captioned telephone service is a type of telecommunications relay service (TRS) eligible for compensation from the Interstate TRS Fund.

Captioned telephone service uses a special telephone that has a text display. Using a single phone line, it permits the user – typically someone who has the ability to speak and some residual hearing – to both listen to what is said over the telephone and simultaneously read captions of what the other person is saying. Two-line captioned telephone service permits the user to simultaneously listen to and read what the other person is saying; however, through use of the second line, it provides the user access to functionality that one-line captioned telephone service does not offer.

The Commission noted the advantages of two-line captioned telephone service over one-line service. For example, with the Commission's order, deaf and hard of hearing consumers will be able to access a host of services that were previously unavailable to them, such as *69, call waiting, and call forwarding.

Two-line service also makes it possible for users to access 9-1-1 emergency services directly, in the same way that hearing telephone users access these services (while simultaneously receiving captions back on the second telephone line). In addition, two-line captioned telephone service allows two or more persons to be on the call at the same time (*e.g.*, by using another telephone extension in the same house) because the primary connection is a direct voice connection, just like with any other call. Finally, unlike with one-line captioned telephone service, the captioning service can be added to a call at any time during the call (even after the call is in progress) by engaging the second line (which is the call to the captioned telephone service).

The Commission also adopted the allocation methodology proposed by the National Exchange Carrier Association (NECA), the administrator of the Interstate TRS Fund, for determining the number of inbound two-line captioned telephone minutes that should be

compensated from that Fund. This mechanism is similar to the methodology presently used for 800 and 900 number call minutes.

The order will be effective 30 days after publication in the Federal Register.

Action by the Commission July 14, 2005, by Order (FCC 05-141). Chairman Martin, Commissioners Abernathy, Copps and Adelstein. Separate statements issued by Chairman Martin, Abernathy, Copps and Adelstein.

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